
Complaints about Consolidated Fabricators layoffs probed

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AUBURN – Attorney General Maura T. Healey’s office Tuesday confirmed it has received complaints from employees of a recently shuttered Auburn manufacturer who allege they weren’t paid their final checks in violation of law.

“We have received complaints and are reviewing them,” the office said in an email response to an inquiry about layoffs last week at Consolidated Fabricators in Auburn.

The parent company of Consolidated Fabricators, Innova Global Ltd. of Canada, was placed in receivership April 1. Employees of Consolidated Fabricators were laid off April 8, several days after the receiver, PricewaterhouseCoopers, was recognized in the U.S courts.

Multiple employees have contacted the T&G and said they did not receive their final paycheck.

Chapter 149, Section 148 of Massachusetts General Law states that “any employee discharged from such employment shall be paid in full on the day of his discharge.”

The law states that such wages “shall include any holiday or vacation payments due an employee under an oral or written agreement.”

Penalties for violating the law include fining of up to \$25,000 and imprisonment of up to a year for a first offense.

Employees who spoke to the T&G said many of the 30 to 40 people who work at Consolidated Fabricators are struggling after losing their jobs and health insurance without notice.

The employees declined to be quoted because of a clause in their termination agreement that states, “We remind you that you continue to be bound by your obligations to maintain confidential information about the company strictly confidential.”

The termination letter also states, “The receiver is not responsible at law or otherwise for any unpaid salary, wages, vacation pay, pension contributions or benefits, payment in lieu of notice (termination pay) or severance pay or any other employee benefits, or accrued incentives or entitlements owing to you by the company prior to the receiver exercising its authority in the United States.”

Mao-Lin Shen, a spokesman for PricewaterhouseCoopers in the U.S., did not return a request for comment Tuesday. A message left at Innova headquarters in Canada also went unreturned.

An “Employee FAQ” posted to PricewaterhouseCoopers’ Canada website indicated “all valid employees of Innova” were entitled to receive “accrued but unpaid base wages” owed until April 2, 2019.

That date is six days before the April 8 termination notice issued to Consolidated Fabricated employees in Auburn.

Maura Greene, a longtime Boston employment attorney, said Tuesday that while she couldn’t speak to this case specifically, Ms. Healey’s office “aggressively pursues” companies that violate wage and hour laws.

“The AG’s office has broad powers of enforcement for violations of wage laws, including investigating, issuing citations and requiring companies to pay civil penalties,” Ms. Greene said.

Ms. Healey’s website includes numerous examples of settlements and civil penalties assessed companies for violation of wage and labor laws.

Workers who believe their rights have been violated in their workplace can file complaints at www.mass.gov/ago/wagetheft.

Consolidated Fabricators, at 17 Mark St., has not returned phone and email messages seeking comment on its closing. The business designs and manufactures auxiliary equipment and replacement combustion parts for the gas turbine and power generation industry.

Innova Global owed more than \$74 million to creditors, records show. A notice posted last week on the door of Consolidated Fabricators makes no mention of how customers will be dealt with, and tells people with questions to call (403) 509-7382.

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